

RETIREMENT

Oldest postman sadly delivers his letter of intent

By Christopher Wills

Associated Press writer

1-29-93

HARVEL, Ill. — You can't call August Sutter impulsive. He has delivered mail along the same country roads for 64 years and lived in the same house 73 years.

So when the nation's longest-serving mail carrier decides to retire, you know he's thought it over carefully.

"I would continue to carry mail, only my wife isn't too well. Time to be home with her, spending our last few years together," the 83-year-old says with a country twang.

Monday is Sutter's last day on the job.

He loves his work, loves to talk about the early days in an unheated Model-T or, when the roads were bad, on horseback. He dismisses the length of his career with a brief "I was well-satisfied" but lingers over the intricacies of mail processing.

He has seen plenty of changes since he became a rural mail carrier back in 1929. Roads improved, cars improved, postmasters came and went, stamps grew more expensive, mail trains vanished and computers appeared.

Apparently only one other postal worker — a window clerk — has been on the job longer than



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rural mail carrier August Sutter, 83, will retire Monday after 64 years on the job to care for his ailing wife.

Sutter, and only by a few months, says Postal Service spokeswoman Debra Hawkins. Among mail carriers, Sutter leads the pack.

"He's seen about everything a person could see," says Robert

Herman, Sutter's postmaster in the small central Illinois town of Raymond.

What keeps him on the road?

At first, it was just the work, he says. During the Depression, you

didn't turn your back on a good job. But that is only part of the answer.

"The big point is, you're on your own, nobody looking over your shoulder," he says.

Ex-House postmaster told officials he was unaware of wrongdoing

By LARRY MARGASAK
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — More than a year before pleading guilty to helping congressmen redeem stamps

for personal cash, the former House postmaster told investigators he was not aware of such practices, documents show.

"Not to my knowledge sir," Robert V. Rota said on April 7, 1992, when pressed in an internal House probe about his knowledge of lawmakers trading in stamps bought with taxpayer funds.

A transcript of Rota's remarks was reviewed Wednesday by The Associated Press. The transcript has not been made public, and House Republicans said they were pushing for a vote today to release that interview and all other documents from last year's internal investigation.

But interim U.S. Attorney J. Ramsey Johnson wrote House leaders Wednesday that release of the papers "could have a significant adverse effect on the ongoing criminal investigation" he is conducting.

"The public's right to know is paramount," countered House GOP leader Robert Michel of Illinois.

The federal investigation achieved a major breakthrough Monday when Rota pleaded guilty to conspiracy and embezzlement charges. He admitted cooperating with congressmen to get them personal cash when they turned in officially bought stamps, or official vouchers stating they were buying stamps.

Stamp purchases listed in court papers pointed to House Ways and

Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., as one of those who received embezzled House Post Office funds.

Rostenkowski was not named, but the transactions matched those listed in public records by date, amount and goods purchased.

The internal House investigation ended in July 1992 with separate Democratic and Republican reports finding serious mismanagement at the post office — a contract agency of the postal service staffed by House employees.

In the April 1992 interrogation, Rota was asked whether he was familiar with allegations in the news media about the sale and return of stamps.

"Those allegations, sir, I have heard them for years all over the place, every place," Rota responded. "That is a very simple thing. If I was a newspaper man, that is easy. You can just say, 'Hey, they are turning stamps back.' If they are, I am not aware of it."

Rota's interrogation covered 209 pages, but only three of them dwelt on the subject of stamps for cash. Those who participated in the probe said Rota's denials steered investigators away from any embezzlement schemes between the former postmaster and lawmakers.

Rota said House members turned in one set of stamps for another if they wanted a particular design, such as a flag.

Poverty rate rises among kids in U.S.

By JENNIFER DIXON
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Poverty is rising among young children and many tend to come from single-parent homes and households where little English is spoken, according to a government study.

The General Accounting Office study, released today, underscores the difficulty in expanding preschool programs for an increasingly diverse and disadvantaged population.

"The increase in the number, diversity and needs of disadvantaged preschool-aged children poses potential obstacles to achieving the first national education goal that all children be ready for school by the year 2000," said GAO, the congressional watchdog agency.

The study found that while the number of preschool children grew by 16 percent during the 1980s, the number of

by 28 percent, from 1.1 million to 1.4 million.

By 1990, one of every five preschool-age children was from a family with income below the poverty level. By comparison, 13 percent of elderly people and 9 percent of adults 25 to 64 were poor.



AP Photo

Richard Weston, a mail handler at the Melville Long Island Postal Center in New York, loads a large box of junk mail from area post offices onto a truck Thursday for recycling.

Postal Service launches effort to recycle undeliverable junk mail

15 OCT 1993
By DAVID E. KALISH
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — The next time you reach for a tissue, you could be wiping your nose with one of those Ed McMahon you-may-already-have-won notices.

The Postal Service is launching a drive to help recycle undelivered bulk business mail — read: junk mail — into everything from toilet paper to pizza boxes.

Every year, 4.3 billion pieces of junk mail fail to reach the intended recipients because of outdated mailing lists.

“As a result, who gets left holding the bag? The U.S. Postal Service. As far as the Postal Service is concerned, that is a big

problem,” said Charles Vidich, environmental compliance coordinator for the agency’s Northeast region.

Instead of throwing the catalogs and other come-ons in the garbage, as it does now, the Postal Service hopes to collect it at its huge mail-sorting centers around the country and then invite recyclers to take it away for free.

In the Northeast, the program resulted in the recycling of up to 40 percent — 16,000 tons — of undelivered junk mail this year, Vidich said. The region’s 3,000 post offices hope to recycle all errant junk mail by 1995.

Besides preserving precious landfill space, the program could save the Postal Service about

\$2.28 million a year in the Northeast by cutting disposal costs, Vidich said.

The promise of a steady supply of junk mail could win over recyclers who normally are reluctant to accept glossy advertisements, which are harder to recycle than plain office paper or newsprint because of the clay, glue and other materials that have to be separated before the paper is turned into pulp.

Tapping a single source of waste paper is far easier than “calling up 30 different cities and getting 100 pounds here, 100 pounds there,” said Dan Sandoval, editor of Fibre Market News, a trade publication.

him as little more than a... Justifying the use of a small... of the tactical nuclear arsenal... resurrect the Soviet Union or re... establish the Russian imperium... ight seem a cost worth the bene...

The effects of even a small nu... ear exchange in Russia are hor... ndous to contemplate. One has... ly to think back to the wide... read panic caused by the Cher... byl nuclear accident as fallout... ifted across Europe to grasp the... plications. And, if conventional

Zhirinovsky is an extremist, but... extremists prosper in chaos. And... he is far from alone in his hatred of... the direction in which Yeltsin and... his associates are leading Russia.

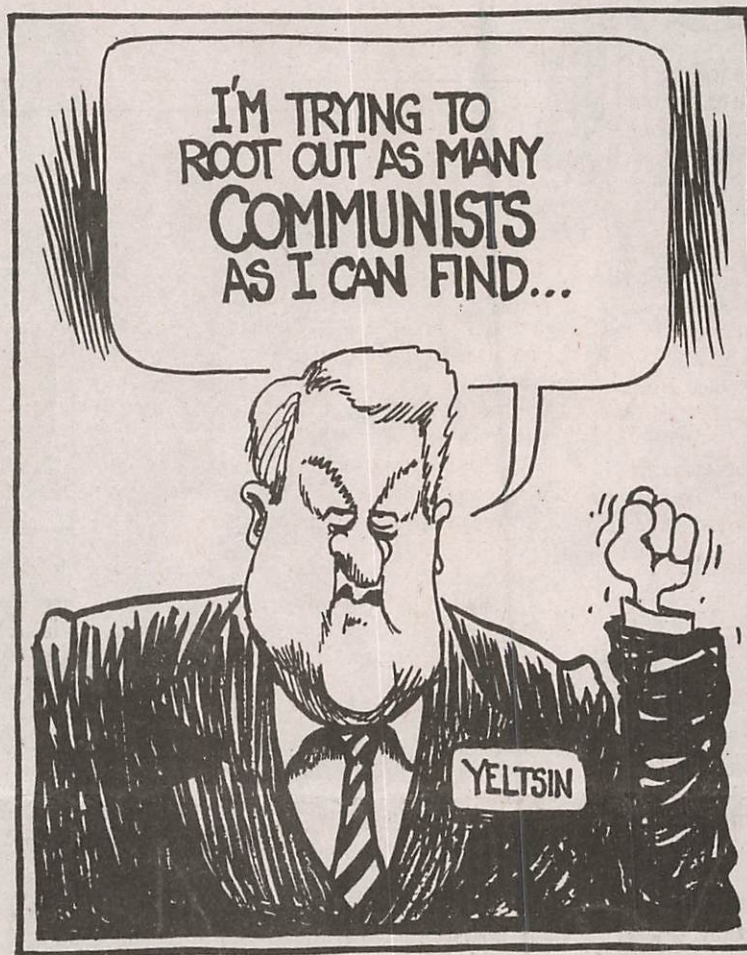
There is, in addition, some... precedent for concern about the... use of nuclear weapons in civil... disputes. At least twice since... China entered the nuclear club in... 1964, the Chinese nuclear arsenal... has been a concern during domes... tic troubles.

The first instance was in the... winter of 1967-68, when the Xia-

by the Russian tactical nuclear ar... senal?

We should enhance efforts to... help Russia dismantle its nuclear... arsenal. The United States can... make no better investment in peace... than to help Russia reduce its stock... of nuclear weapons, whether stra... tegic or tactical.

Most important, we must realize... that our bedrock goal in dealing... with Russia must be the mainte... nance of a functioning, effective... and non-hostile government. The



guide to the coming health care

skirmish. Whether or not an em... ployer now provides health care... for employees will color an em... ployer's view of Bill and Hillary's... mandate.

CONFLICT NO. 2: The rela... tionship between the words "con... sumers" and "taxpayers," which... fly out of the mouths of health... policy experts as if they are as... distinct as "north" and "south."... In actuality, health care "consum... ers" and "taxpayers" are often... the same person.

Who does the White House have... in mind when it speaks of assuming... government's share of the president's... proposal, the major costs of... which would be attached to provid... ing subsidies for struggling small... businesses and lower-income... workers? Is there a Daddy War... bucks out there we don't know... about?

To be fair, the White House... argues that subsidies and other... costs not borne by employers and... employees can be financed by cuts... in Medicare and Medicaid spend... ing and by hiking taxes on ciga... rettes.

Yet Senate Finance Chairman... Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a New... York Democrat, terms the Clinton

that's who.

On a conflict scale of one to 10,... give the taxpayer-consumer prob... lem a seven for its potential of... creating a real case of public schi... zophrenia. "Consumers" may... like expanded benefits and cover... age, but "taxpayers" will balk... when higher tax bills come due.

CONFLICT NO. 3: This politi... cal problem falls into the who'll... budget-first category. Will moder... ate Republicans and conservative... Democrats who've recently of... fered health plans that do not in... clude employer mandates or caps... on insurance premiums make the

first compromise, or will the Clin... ton administration?

In a recent phone-around with... Texas newspapers, Deputy Treas... ury Secretary Roger Altman said... that opposing forces will soon... agree with both mandates and... caps. Not much room for compro... mise there.

Yet in a recent editorial session... with The Dallas Morning News,... Rep. Mike Andrews, a Houston... Democrat who is a principal author... of the conservative Democratic al... ternative, said that his troops are... not ready to acquiesce. Comprom... ise will be necessary, Andrews

DUCK RA

SATURDAY (TOMORROW)

Buy ducks from 9A.M.